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Ancient Legends of Roman History. By ETTORE PAIS. Translated by MARIO E. COSENZA. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1905. Pp. xiv + 336. \$4 net.

This book is made up of the lectures delivered by Professor Pais at the Lowell Institute, with some additional chapters, and six elaborate excursuses. Its scope is indicated by the titles of some of its chapters: "The Excavations in the Forum and Their Importance for the Most Ancient Roman History," "The Origins of Rome," "The Legend of Servius Tullius," "The Fabii at the River Cremera and the Spartans at Thermopylae," "The Saxum Tarpeium."

Since the publication of the first volume of his *Storia di Roma*, Pais has been recognized as the champion of the extreme critical school, and a man who must always be reckoned with, no matter whether his views be accepted or not. In the present work he has developed his theories upon many points that were barely touched upon in the *Storia*, and has discussed other parts of the tradition with a most rigorous application of his critical methods. His present attitude seems to be that not only can no confidence be placed in any portion of the canonical version of the history of Rome before the Gallic invasion, but that much of what is said to have occurred during the fourth century is also impossible. He has likewise fallen a victim to the solar-myth theory, and shows a remarkable fondness for this method of explaining early legends, as when he says (p. 149): "Servius is a Latin conception and belongs to a solar cult, and to that group of legends with which are to be connected, not only Virbius of Aricia and Hippolytus, but also Pelops and Hippodamia;" and again (p. 150): "We do not marvel that a solar and river divinity should have been made king of Rome. Romulus, Tullius, Numa, and Ancus Marcius were all solar deities."

Pais's ingenuity is marvelous, and there is hardly a page that does not contain conclusions of the most striking kind which cause previous historians of Rome to seem like monuments of conservatism. But his fundamental weakness is this, that, basing his arguments upon hypotheses that are themselves uncertain, he proceeds to construct elaborate theories which finally assume in his mind the certainty of facts, and are then used as valid grounds for further inference. This tendency was held in check in the *Storia*, so that, to the present reviewer at least, that work seemed to rest on secure foundations, but in the present book it has been carried so far that the resultant product is a wonderful illustration of the *reductio ad absurdum* of extreme skepticism combined with a most vivid imagination.

The translation, being the work of an Italian, is marred by some peculiarities that occur with annoying frequency.

SAMUEL BALL PLATNER